In The Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing the incidence of mastitis in a dairy animal, the method comprising the step of:

topically applying an antimicrobial composition to the teats of the animal, the composition comprising (1) ~~at least~~ from about 60% to about 95% of a lipophilic polar solvent selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethylene glycol, glycerol, and isopropanol, by weight of the composition[[;]]; (2) at least two C_8 to C_{14} fatty acids in a total amount of from about 0.5% to about 5% by weight of the composition; and (3) ~~devoid of sufficient fatty acid ester to substantially improve the antimicrobial activity of the composition~~ from about .5% to about 39.5% of a secondary solvent, by weight of composition.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, where the lipophilic polar solvent is propylene glycol.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, where the lipophilic polar solvent is present in an amount from about 60% to about 75% by weight of the composition.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing the incidence of mastitis in a dairy animal, the method comprising the step of:

topically applying an antimicrobial composition to the teats or udder of the animal, the composition comprising:

~~at least~~ from about [[~~50%~~]] 60% to about 95% of a lipophilic polar solvent selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethylene glycol, glycerol, and isopropanol, by weight of composition;

at least two C_8 to C_{14} fatty acids in the total amount from about 0.5% to 5% by weight of the composition; and

~~devoid of sufficient fatty acid ester to substantially improve the antimicrobial activity of the composition~~ a secondary solvent.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein the fatty acids form a fatty acid mixture which ~~composition~~ comprises about 55% by weight of the fatty acid mixture of a C_8 fatty acid [[~~to C_{14}~~]] and about 40% by weight of the fatty acid mixture of a C_{10} fatty acid.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the lipophilic polar solvent is propylene glycol.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the lipophilic polar solvent is present in the amount from about 50% to about 75% by weight of composition.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein the ~~lipophilic polar solvent is present in the amount of at least about 60% by weight of composition~~ secondary solvent is selected from the group consisting of:

water, alcohol, and mixtures thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein one of the fatty acids is caprylic acid.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein one of the fatty acids is capric acid.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing the incidence of mastitis in a dairy animal, the method comprising the step of:

topically applying an antimicrobial composition to the teats of the animal, the composition comprising; ~~at least about 50%~~ from about 60% by weight of the composition to about 95% by weight of the composition of a lipophilic polar solvent having a dielectric constant greater than 25, and

at least two C_8 to C_{14} fatty acids in the total amount of from about 0.5% to about 5% by weight of the composition~~, and devoid of sufficient fatty acid ester to substantially improve the antimicrobial activity of the composition~~.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the lipophilic polar solvent is selected from a group consisting of propylene glycol, ethylene, glycol, glycerol, and isopropanol.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the fatty acids form a fatty acid mixture which ~~antimicrobial composition~~ comprises about 55% by weight of the fatty acid mixture of a C_8 fatty acid [[~~to C_{14}~~]] and about 40% by weight of the fatty acid mixture of a C_{10} fatty acid.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the antimicrobial composition has a pH below about 4.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein at least one of the fatty acids in the antimicrobial composition is selected from a group consisting of:

a C_{12} fatty acid or a C_{14} fatty acid.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein at least one of the fatty acids in the antimicrobial composition is a [[~~C_7~~]]C_8 fatty acid.

17. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing the incidence of mastitis in a dairy animal, the method comprising the step of:

topically applying an antimicrobial composition to the teats or udder of the animal, the composition comprising:

~~at least~~ from about [[~~50%~~]] 60% to about 95% of a lipophilic polar solvent having a dielectric constant greater than 25 by weight of composition; and

at least two [[~~C_7~~]] C_8 to C_{14} fatty acids in a total amount from about 0.5% to 5% by weight of the composition~~; and~~

~~devoid of sufficient fatty acid ester to substantially improve the antimicrobial activity of the composition~~.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the lipophilic polar solvent is selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethylene glycol, and glycerol~~, and isopropanol~~.

20. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the lipophilic polar solvent is present in the amount from about 50% to about 75% by weight of composition.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein one of the fatty acids is caprylic acid.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein one of the fatty acids is capric acid.

24. (Currently Amended) An antimicrobial composition for reducing the incidence of mastitis in a dairy animal, the composition comprising:

~~at least~~ from about [[~~50%~~]] 60% to about 95% of a lipophilic polar solvent having a dielectric constant greater than 25, by weight of the composition; and

at least two [[~~C_7~~]] C_8 to C_{14} fatty acids in the total amount of from about 0.5% to about 5% by weight of the composition~~; and~~

~~devoid of sufficient fatty acid ester to substantially improve the antimicrobial activity of the composition~~.

25. (Previously Presented) The antimicrobial composition of claim 24, wherein the lipophilic polar solvent is selected from a group consisting of: propylene glycol, ethylene glycol, and glycerol~~, and isopropanol~~.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Original) The antimicrobial composition of claim 24, wherein the antimicrobial composition has a pH below about 4.

28. (Currently Amended) The antimicrobial composition of claim 24, wherein the fatty acids are selected from the group consisting essentially of [[~~C_{7-5}~~]] C_8, C_9, C_{10}, C_{12} and C_{14} fatty acids.